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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat;
kick in the pants

A kick in the pants to the Air Force decision not to conduct an F-15 flyover at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Their policy restricts flyovers to national sporting events and patriotic holiday events. After the sequester, flyovers were axed nationwide as a way to save money, but those restrictions are now being eased.

We would argue that the Round-Up, while maybe not being a national sporting event or a solely patriotic event, is pretty darn close to both. So, rounding up, it should qualify for a flyover, which had long been a tradition at the esteemed rodeo.

Our Congressional representatives have delivered their own kicks in the pants (which carry a little bit more oomph in Washington than ours), with senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Representative Greg Walden each sending a letter to the Air Force, asking them to reconsider.

We think that would be wise.

Sure, there are many more people gathered in Autzen Stadium on a Saturday afternoon, but there is something about rodeo and the Round-Up that seem custom-made for a flyover. And besides, the horses love it.



A tip of the hat to everyone who celebrated Memorial Day by remembering American soldiers killed in battle.



We don't publish on Mondays, so it's hard as a newspaper — especially the editorial page — to honor the real reasons for the day. We did, however, attend the Memorial Day observances at cemeteries in Pendleton and Hermiston, taking pictures and telling the stories we found there. One was of Helix teacher Lorin Kubishta, who spoke of the sacrifices of past generations — especially those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. It's worth remembering.

When the sun comes out and campfires and cabins beckon for a

long weekend, it's easy to pull up stakes on responsibility and head for the regenerative hills. But spending Memorial Day in gratitude is the least we can do to remember the people who bequeathed us the country we know today.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

OTHER VIEWS

Oregon should consider banning death penalty

The (Eugene) Register-Guard

Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts says he plans to veto a bill passed last week that would abolish his state's death penalty, declaring "the Legislature is out of touch with Nebraskans."

It may be the governor, not state lawmakers, who is out of touch.

In the state's unicameral legislature, which has 49 state senators, it takes 30 votes to override a veto by the governor. Thirty-two senators voted in favor of ending the death penalty.

That means Ricketts will have to persuade some lawmakers to change their minds if he wants to prevent Nebraska from becoming the 19th state — and the first red state in recent years — to formally abolish the death penalty.

Nebraska has been steadily moving away from the death penalty for years. The Legislature voted to ban executions in 1979, but the move fell prey to gubernatorial veto. A temporary moratorium in 1999 met a similar fate, and a proposed ban in 2007 failed by a single vote in the Legislature. Nearly a quarter century has passed since the state's last execution.

Nebraska's Legislature is nonpartisan, but it is dominated by conservatives. Its support for ending the death penalty reflects a growing shift within the nation's political right. While Republicans once defended capital punishment as a necessary deterrent, a

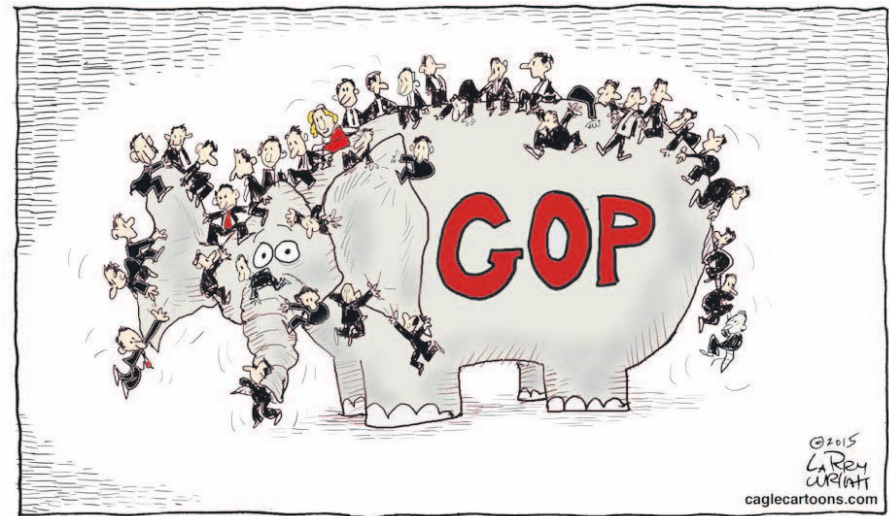
growing number have begun supporting repeal for religious reasons, while others point to wrongful convictions and botched executions. Others cite it as a prime example of a wasteful government program.

Executions have dropped to a two-decade low in the United States. Thirty-five people were executed in 2014, compared with a peak of 98 just 15 years ago. In 43 states, no executions were carried out last year. So far, 18 states have abolished the death penalty.

In Oregon, voters abolished the death penalty in 1914, reinstated it in 1920, repealed it in 1964 and reinstated it again in 1978. After the Oregon Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional in 1981, voters approved a constitutionally proper version in 1984.

Oregon carried out its last two executions in 1996 and 1997, during Gov. John Kitzhaber's first term — the state's first executions since 1962. Since then there have been none, and three years ago Kitzhaber, saying he believed the death penalty has been unjustly administered and is morally wrong, declared a moratorium on executions as long as he remained governor. Gov. Kate Brown, who succeeded Kitzhaber following his resignation, says she intends keep the moratorium in place.

It's time for Oregon to have a long-overdue debate about the death penalty, a discussion that ideally leads to a statewide vote that clarifies where citizens stand on the issue.



Bernie Sanders is Hillary's leftward advance man

Is Bernie Sanders pulling Hillary Clinton to the Left? No, for the same reason a canoe doesn't pull an aircraft carrier.

The Vermont socialist running in the Democratic presidential race is currently at 7.4 percent in the RealClearPolitics average of national polls, versus Clinton's 64.2 percent. Clinton is in fact moving leftward on issues like immigration, gay marriage, inequality and more, but it's not because she's feeling the heat from a little-known competitor.

BYRON YORK

Comment

How to pay for a new, nearly Obamacare-sized federal program? By imposing a "speculation fee" on Wall Street. "Right now, you have people who are becoming phenomenally wealthy by speculating in derivatives and every other type of esoteric instrument that they can," Sanders said recently on CNN. "People are getting very rich on Wall Street. We're going to impose what exists in dozens of countries around the world, a modest tax on the transference of large amounts of stock."

Would Clinton go the full Sanders and advocate free tuition for all? Probably not, but it would not be a surprise if, now that Sanders has gotten the more radical idea out there, Clinton moves a bit further left than some expected.

There's no penalty. To cite one completely unscientific example, a new focus group of 10 Iowa Democrats, put together by Purple Strategies and Bloomberg Politics, found Democratic voters not at all concerned about Clinton's move to the left — in fact, wanting more.

Sanders is going public with wish list plans to make the federal government even more massive, even more expensive and even more intrusive.

"She's getting my support," said a Democrat named Bill. "She's moved to the left on a couple of issues I really care about."

"I think she's looked at as kind of a centrist," added a group member named Charlie. "But I think she's going to have to move to the left a little bit. I mean, it's either going to be that, or it's going to be Scott Walker ... destroying America's unions."

News reports stressed one of the focus group's awkward moments — when Democrats said they admired Clinton's experience but were unable to name even a single accomplishment as secretary of state. But perhaps the bigger news from the session is that Clinton has virtually unlimited room to run on the left.

Still, Sanders is staking out a role as the forward scout of the Democratic Left, going public with wish list plans to make the federal government even more massive, even more expensive, and even more intrusive. In the absence of Elizabeth Warren, who many of the most progressive Democrats would have preferred, Sanders is broadening the conversation in what is sometimes called the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party.

Just look at something known among progressives as "debt-free college." The idea is that all young people deserve a government guarantee that they can graduate from college without debt, a result accomplished either by outright grants or cheap loans.

Clinton is moving toward the idea. Earlier this month, her campaign manager, Robby Mook, thrilled progressives when he said in a TV interview that "what voters are looking for in this election is someone who's going to be a champion for everyday people — for young people, that's debt-free college."

Then, during a campaign stop in Iowa this week, Clinton herself said, "We have to deal with the indebtedness — to try to move toward making college as debt-free as possible."

Government-guaranteed debt-free college is a step beyond President Obama's free community college program. But this week, Sanders trumped them all with two new bills — the "College for All Act" and its companion, "The Inclusive Prosperity Act of 2015" — that would eliminate undergraduate tuition at all public colleges and universities.

Under Sanders' plan, college would be free for all, everywhere, paid for by the government in a program Sanders estimates would cost taxpayers more than \$70 billion a year, or somewhere around \$750 billion over the next decade.

Sanders would also dramatically cheapen college loans for other college expenses and for those who do not attend tuition-free institutions.

Clinton's experience but were unable to name even a single accomplishment as secretary of state. But perhaps the bigger news from the session is that Clinton has virtually unlimited room to run on the left.

Right now, the only constraint on Clinton is what will pass with voters in the general election. And she appears to believe the Obama years have moved things considerably leftward of where they were in 2008. This week, the *Washington Post* reported that Clinton's approach "is a bet that social and demographic shifts mean that no left-leaning position Clinton takes now would be likely to hurt her in making her case to moderate and independent voters in the general election next year."

Given that, Bernie Sanders' role is not so much to pull Clinton to the left as to show her how far she can go.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

YOUR VIEWS

Odor ordinance will spark boom in air freshener industry

I congratulate Peter Walters for igniting an unprecedented response to his satirical letter regarding the absurdity of an odor law in Pendleton. It received national recognition because no one has ever had the courage to write an essay revolving around the malodorous characteristic of flatulence.

Despite the emphasis on humor, Peter's intent was to draw attention to the city council's focus on the odor of marijuana rather than make decisions that are more relevant to our town's progress. Kudos to Jane Hill for having the courage to vote against this madness.

When I read that the amendment also addresses the issue of keeping marijuana grow sites hidden from public view, I had a "Eureka!" moment. As a result of Proposition 91, residents in Oregon will be able to grow their own plants so I foresee a boom in fencing businesses. However, I think there is a window of opportunity to sell an accessory for marijuana growers.

I will purchase cases of "Car Freshener 50101 Little Tree Air Freshener-Royal Pine." You see them hanging on rear view mirrors placed there by drivers thinking that this will keep a cop from discovering if you've been

smoking grass in your vehicle.

When I drive around Pendleton, I've noticed that some people never take down their Christmas lights that hang from the roofs of their homes. This gave me the idea of marketing my new product, "Odor No More."

I hate to divulge my secret but I welcome competitors. Let the market determine my success. I will purchase fishing line and attach air fresheners to hook clip connector swivels every six inches. A grower will only have to tell me the length of the fence and I will deliver and install their order for "Odor No More."

Perhaps this brainstorm will motivate the city council to make a decision regarding medical marijuana as well as explaining how the cost of living in Pendleton will increase dramatically by raising utility costs, permit fees, taxes on property frontage and other equally loathsome solutions to address the issue of street maintenance.

However, I have one recommendation that serves two purposes. The city can give away flower seeds that can be planted in potholes as part of our city's beautification program. The plants will also alert drivers to drive around the pot holes and avoid a visit to Les Schwab for a front end alignment.

Jerry Cronin
Pendleton

LETTERS POLICY

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Send letters to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.